

FINAL



WEARE BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MEETING MINUTES
September 10, 2008

PRESENT: Thomas Clow, Chairman; Heleen Kurk, Selectman; Keith Lacasse, Selectman; Richard Butt, Selectman

CODE ENFORCEMENT OFFICER: Chip Meany

RECORDING SECRETARY: Thomas Clow

GUESTS: None

This meeting consisted of visits by the Selectmen and the Code Enforcement Officer, Mr. Chip Meany to the five active gravel operations in the Town of Weare. It was not a posted meeting; however, an inquiry to the Local Government Center resulted in an opinion that it should have been posted and a recommendation that minutes be drafted. The purpose of the meeting was to get a first hand view of the gravel operations, since the Board of Selectmen serve as the local regulators of that industry. No votes were taken during the course of the visits, and no decisions were made.

The Selectmen and Mr. Meany met at the Town Office Building just before 1:00 p.m. and drove to the Townes' site on the corner of Reservoir Drive and Thorndike Road. They were met there by Eldon Townes and Rick Townes and driven to the upper level of the operation that is presently being used. They were shown the areas that have been reclaimed as well as the collection ponds that prevent runoff onto town roads or other property. Rick Townes explained that the stone crusher that was on the site was for sale and would eventually be removed. He also explained that the loam that is screened on the site is actually trucked in from job sites. All loam from the pit area is saved and used for reclamation. Selectman Lacasse asked if there are any rules that the town imposes that makes it difficult for them to do business. Both Eldon and Rick answered no. There was also some discussion of the state and federal regulation process.

Next the group drove to the Schmidt's gravel pit off East Road. They were met there by Ray Banks who answered questions concerning the extent to which the area would be excavated. He indicated that there was very little activity at the pit and only spoke of one hauler removing gravel from the site.

Shortly after 2:00 p.m. the group arrived at the Brownie's Sand and Gravel on Route 114 just South of Weare Center. They were met there by Deb, Rick, and Burt Brown. At this point Selectman Butt left the group and did not continue on the tour for the remainder of the day, stating that he was uncomfortable that the meeting had not been posted. The Browns explained their operation. They explained that the rock crusher that was working that day was contracted and was only brought in several times a year when needed. Much of the reclaimed area on the Brown site is now the location of self storage units. The Browns also pointed out another reclaimed area with thickly growing trees and bushes. There was discussion of the size of the area available for excavation and its boundaries. The Browns deal in bark mulch products as well as earth products.

The next stop was the Thibeault site on Clough State Park Road. Members of the group were each given a map of the site which showed the present permitted area, reclaimed areas, and an expansion area. Ernie Thibeault drove the group through the areas accompanied by his brother and an employee. He first showed a reclaimed area where his brother has built a house. Next he brought the group to the expansion area that was in dispute because he needed a variance in order to continue the excavation. Next the group drove through reclaimed areas where banks had been gently sloped and planted. Parts of the valley floor were planted with vegetables in the reclaimed area. The southernmost area on the map was an active gravel pit in the permitted portion of the site. The group's tour ended at the edge of this active area.

The final stop of the day was at Mt. William Inc. on River Road. The business is owned by Chris Bolton and is by far the largest operation in the town. Mr. Bolton met the group upon their arrival and conducted an extensive tour of the site. He explained that the natural evolution of the area had deposited sand at the south end of the site, created large masses of ledge in the central portion, and deposited gravel on the northern end. The group was driven to all areas of the site including the top of the ledges overlooking the whole operation. Mr. Bolton explained the different products produced by his business as the group tour the site. A major difference between this business and the others toured during the day is that Mt. William is a major rock crushing operation. Much of the equipment used on the site was designed and built by Mr. Bolton. During the tour of the site Mr. Bolton explained that many of the surrounding towns as well as the Town of Weare depend on his business for earth products. Many of these products, he said, would not be available elsewhere without driving a considerable distance.

Shortly before 5:00 p.m. Selectman Lacasse left the group because he had a prior commitment. Selectman Clow, Selectman Kurk, and Code Enforcement Officer Meany continued on to see the gravel excavation area and to see the inside of the garage and office complex. They left the site at approximately 5:30 p.m.

Thomas S. Clow
Recording Secretary

